

WO-339
Atlantic Hotel
Ocean City
Private

1926

The Atlantic Hotel has been a long-time fixture in Ocean City. The current, three-story H-shaped frame hotel is an early twentieth century replacement of the Victorian hotel that burned in December 1925. The oceanfront or boardwalk elevation of the hotel is dominated by a single-story brick commercial front erected during the last thirty years. Despite the disfiguration of the east front, the Atlantic Hotel is one of the most prominent old hotel structures left in Ocean City. Subtle period details such as the broad hip roofs, the corner pilasters, the exterior brick chimneys, and the six-over-six sash windows contribute to the early twentieth century character of the building.

Construction of the first Atlantic Hotel was one of the earliest commercial ventures in the new seaside resort in an effort to supply accommodations for the public. In an early organizational meeting held in Salisbury in 1874, the Atlantic Hotel Company met at the office of E. Stanley Toadvine to discuss several issues. A newspaper article printed in the Salisbury Advertiser on Saturday, August 8, 1874, related,

A letter from David Fowler, Esq. of Baltimore county was read, declining to the position of Director in said company. On motion his resignation was accepted and Dr. George R. Dennis of Somerset county, elected to fill the vacancy. Dr. H. R. Pitts was elected permanent president, and B. Jones Taylor, Secretary and treasurer.

A committee consisting of Dr. G. R. Dennis of Somerset, R. J. Henry and Lemuel Showell of Worcester, Dr. S. P. Dennis of Wicomico, and W. B. R. Selby of Philadelphia, were appointed to wait on the subscribers to the capital stock to ascertain their views as to the propriety of building the Hotel on a purchase of a few acres instead of the purchase of a large tract of land, as was first contemplated,

and if that plan should be opposed by them that arrangements will be made. On motion Purnell Toadvine and Dr. H. R. Pitts were appointed a building committee.

It was decided the same day to name the resort Ocean City.

A little less than two years later a tract of fifty acres was acquired from Stephen and Rosetta M. Taber comprising part of a tract, "Ladys Resort to the Ocean," patented to Stephen Taber and Hepburn S. Benson in 1869. The deed, written on July 26, 1876, and executed between the Tabers and Hillary R. Pitts, B. Jones Taylor, and George W. Purnell, stated,

...which tract or parcel of land was duly granted by Letters Patent from the State of Maryland...and being desirous of conforming to the views and general public sentiment of the people of Worcester and the adjacent counties in their desire to establish a place as a sea-side Summer Resort and the promotion and growth of the same...

Within the year a three-and-a-half story frame hotel was erected between Somerset and Wicomico streets facing the ocean. The hotel was one of the largest in Ocean City for many years, and it served visitors until December 1925 when it was destroyed in a devastating fire that consumed the nearby Seaside Hotel as well as the former Pier building. The large three-story H-shaped building was erected in its place by Charles W. Purnell, who had acquired the hotel property in June 1922.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: ATLANTIC HOTEL

MHT Inventory Number: NO-339

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture
Commerce

2) Geographic Orientation:

Eastern Shore

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Industrial / Urban Dominance
(1870-1930)

4) Resource Type(s):

Standing Structure
1. Hotel

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WO-339

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic ATLANTIC HOTEL

and/or common

2. Location

street & number On the Boardwalk--
Between Somerset and Wicomico streets ☐ not for publication

city, town Ocean City ☐ vicinity of congressional district MD

state Maryland county First

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Atlantic Hotel, Inc.

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Ocean City state and zip code MD 21842

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liberEWR 69

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio 13

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WO-339

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved

date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Atlantic Hotel is located between Somerset and Wicomico streets in the center of Ocean City, Worcester County, Maryland. The three-story frame hotel has an eastern, ocean-front exposure.

Built after the December 1925 Atlantic hotel fire, the current three-story, H-shaped frame structure is supported by a concrete block foundation, and the building is covered with medium pitched hip roofs. While the walls are covered with asbestos shingles, the corners of the hotel are trimmed with pilasters. Extending across the boardwalk side of the building is a long, single-story brick storefront with many individual shops. Behind the commercial facade is the three-story hotel with paired or single six-over-six sash windows lighting each floor.

The north and south sides of the hotel are marked by paired or single six-over-six sash with interior brick stove stacks rising through the roof. The west (rear) elevations of the two main sections are dominated by exterior brick stacks along with metal fire escapes.

The interior was not seen.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-339

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Atlantic Hotel has been a long-time fixture of Ocean City. The current three-story, H-shaped frame hotel is an early twentieth century replacement of the Victorian hotel that burned in December 1925. The oceanfront or boardwalk elevation of the hotel is dominated by a single-story brick commercial front erected during the last thirty years. Despite the disfiguration of the east front, the Atlantic Hotel is one of the most prominent old hotel structures left in Ocean City. Modest period details such as the broad hip roofs, the corner pilasters, the exterior brick chimneys, and the six-over-six sash windows contribute to early twentieth character of the building.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Construction of the first Atlantic Hotel was one of the earliest commercial ventures in the new seaside resort in an effort to supply accommodations for the public. In an early organizational meeting held in Salisbury in 1874, the Atlantic Hotel Company met at the office of E. Stanley Toadvine to discuss several issues. A newspaper article printed in the Salisbury Advertiser on Saturday, August 8, 1874, related,

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A committee consisting of Dr. G. R. Dennis of Somerset, R. J. Henry and Lemuel Showell of Worcester, Dr. S. P. Dennis of Wicomico, and W. B. R. Selby of Philadelphia, were appointed to wait on the subscribers to the capital stock to ascertain their views as to the propriety of building the Hotel on a purchase of a few acres instead of the purchase of a large tract of land, as was at first contemplated, and if that plan should be opposed by them that arrangements will be made. On motion Purnell Toadvine and Dr. H. R. Pitts were appointed a building committee.

It was decided at the same meeting to name the resort Ocean City.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WO-339

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Worcester County date 2/19/90

street & number Worcester County Courthouse telephone 310-632-1194

city or town Snow Hill state MD 21863

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

A little less than two years later a tract of fifty acres was acquired from Stephen and Rosetta M. Taber comprising part of a tract, "Ladys Resort to the Ocean," patented by Stephen Taber and Hepburn S. Benson in 1869. The deed, written on July 26, 1876, and executed between the Tabers and Hillary R. Pitts, B. Jones Taylor, and George W. Purnell, stated,

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WO-339
ATLANTIC HOTEL
Ocean City, Maryland
Chain of title

EWB 69/13

Charles W. Purnell

to

11/2/1953

Atlantic Hotel, Inc.

all that lot or parcel of land which
is designated and distinguished as
Block No. two (2) on the Plat of
the original Town of Ocean City

ITM 4/538

ODC 42/514

William B. S. Powell
Della K. Powell

to

6/1/1922

Charles W. Purnell

Block No. 2...together with the
improvements thereon erected including
especially what is known as the
Atlantic Hotel...

ODC 14/197

Clarence Kilby of the City of Washington

to

6/7/1913

William B. S. Powell

and John H. Long (interest of the said
John H. Long was sold to Thomas T. Savage
and Emma R. Savage, 5/22/1914, ODC 16/383
and the said Savages conveyed interests
to William B. S. Powell 6/23/1915
ODC 19/515)

\$12,000 Block No. 2

WO-339
ATLANTIC HOTEL
Ocean City, Maryland
Chain of title continued

Page 2

ODC 11/534

John W. Brawner, attorney of the
City of Washington, D.C.

to

6/4/1912

Clarence C. Kilby

defaulted mortgage between George F.
Taylor to John F. Waggaman 11/4/1908
ODC 2/491

1. \$25,000 ...together with the improvements
thereon consisting of a fine hotel with
about three hundred rooms, commonly known
as the Atlantic Hotel, with the fixtures,
furniture, equipment and other personal
property contained therein...
2. Seaside Hotel, 50 rooms
3. about 3000 building lots running about
3½ miles north of North Division St.
and about 5½ miles south of South
Division St.

Mortgage
ODC 2/491

John F. Waggaman, Anne Arundel Co., Md

from

11/4/1908

George F. Taylor, unmarried of Ocean
City... party of the first part
is justly indebted unto the part of
the second part for \$54,693.06

ODC 2/489

Frank H. Phelps, trustee in the
bankruptcy of the Ocean City Development
Company

to

11/4/1908

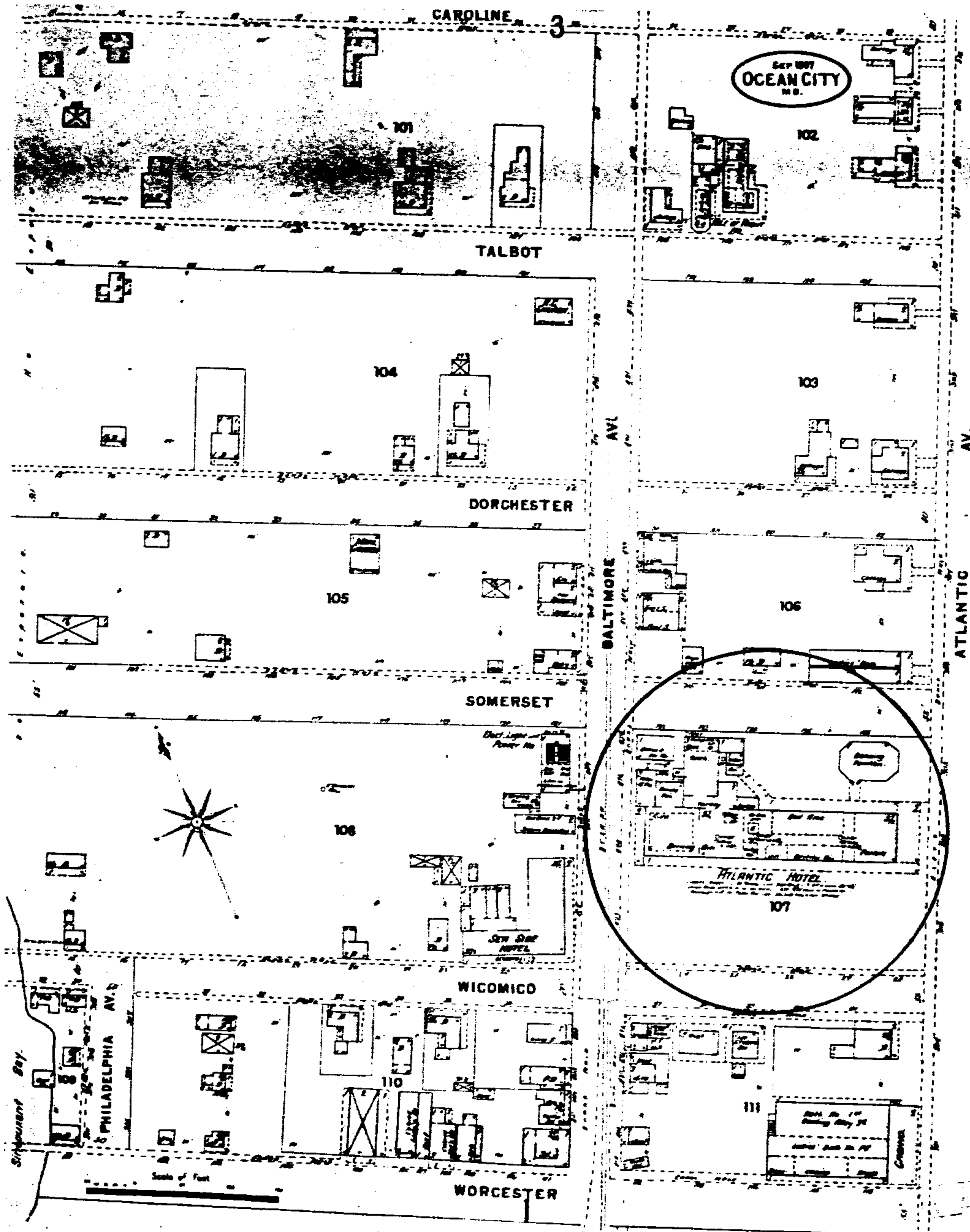
George F. Taylor

Atlantic Hotel, Seaside Hotel, laundry,
and electric lighting buildings in
Ocean City

1897 SANBORN INSURANCE MAP

W0-339

ATLANTIC HOTEL



2

3

